Science & Technology Futures Initiative (SciTech Futures)

2015-Present

The Science and Technology Futures Initiative (SciTech Futures) is an ASA(ALT) funded research project that helps Army leaders ideate in the S&T space while identifying blind spots in Army planning. Not only is the Army acquisition process expensive, but traditional ideation and war gaming techniques, specifically in-person events, are not scalable. SciTech Futures seeks to address these issues by tapping into the wisdom of the crowd with targeted exercises focusing on topics of interest to Army S&T leadership. This broadens the participant pool and expands the number of analyzable ideas at the Army's disposal.

To accomplish this, ICT leverages in-house game design and narrative expertise, SMEs within the US Army and USMC, and contacts across academia. ICT has the unique ability to translate and synthesize concepts between these cross-disciplinary fields. ICT's SciTech Futures platform is web-based, allowing participants to contribute ideas from any PC or mobile device.

The SciTech Futures project consists of three main thrusts:

- Online collaborative ideation platform and exercises
- In-person workshops
- Compelling narrative storytelling

Online collaborative ideation platform

The SciTech Futures online platform can quickly be tailored to foresight topics in support of Future Army Warfighters. Recent exercise topics include "Sustainment and Logistics in the Urban Environment" and "Operationalizing Artificial Intelligence for Multi-Domain Operations," both targeting the 2035 time horizon. Players contribute ideas based on targeted prompts, themes, and questions, collaborating in a virtual workshop setting where they collectively improve ideas.

In-person workshops

The SciTech Futures in-person workshops further develop the ideas that emerge from the online platform. These workshops bring together US Army and USMC SMEs, Hollywood writers, game designers, and Academic researchers to focus on world building. Ideas are developed using both operational and narrative approaches to imagine the environments and technologies that will be used by and against the Future Warfighter. These workshops enable a richer analysis of the technologies and concepts that emerged in the online arena.

Compelling narrative storytelling

The SciTech Futures project's narrative and creative work highlights the most relevant ideas from the in-person workshop and online platform, helping to visualize and crystalize concepts, trends, and technologies by grounding them in near-future, real-world scenarios. This narrative work, which has taken the form of short stories and graphic novels, has been published in Small Wars Journal and the TRADOC Mad Scientist Blog.

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